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MERCY'S MEMORIAL

A
SERMON

Preach'd on the
Thanksgiving-Day,

JANUARY 20, 17¹⁴/₁₅.

Enjoin'd by Publick Authority,

FOR

His Majesty's Peaceable and
Happy ACCESSION to the
Throne of these Nations.

By JOHN TOMLINS,
Minister of the GOSPEL.

24
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MARY'S MEMORIAL

A

SERMON



FOR

IS MARY'S MEMORIAL AND
HAPPY AGGREGATION TO THE
THRONES OF THE DIVINE

BY A NEW FORM

OF THE TWO PARTS

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TO THE
R E A D E R.

Christian Reader,

I*T is not any ambitious Desire to be seen in Print, that hath prevail'd with me to make this Adventure ; for I may truly say, not only as St. Paul, Eph. 3. 8. I am less than the least of all Saints, but as Ignatius once said of himself, Non sum dignus dici minimus, I am not worthy to be call'd the least : But this following Discourse concerning Thanksgiving to God for all his gracious Dealings with his People, and particularly for the great Salvation of the Protestant Churches from the imminent Dangers that they were lately under, is publish'd upon the earnest Desire of some*
A 2 *beloved*

TO the READER.

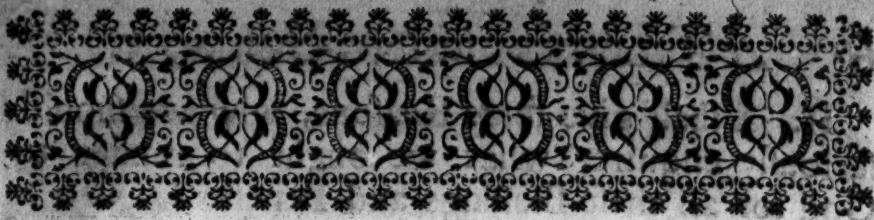
beloved Friends, who indeed were unwilling to take a Denial.

If the Lord be pleased to give it Favour in thy Eyes, and to make it useful to enlarge thy Heart in Thankfulness for all past Benefits, and present Mercies and Deliverances, and to engage thee more strongly to the Love and Service of himself, I desire that the Lord may have all the Glory. I leave thee, Christian Reader, and this poor Treatise to the Blessing of Heaven.

J. T.



PSAL.



PSAL. cxvi. 12.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?

THIS Verse contains the holy, gracious, and grateful Enquiry of the *Psalmist*; and here,

1. He acknowledgeth, that he had received many Benefits from God.

2. He implies, that God did expect some Return; and that it was but reasonable that he should return solemn Thanks and Praise to Him for delivering him from grievous Calamities, and out of deadly Straits and Dangers.

3. He seriously asks himself, what he shall return and render unto the Lord for so many and great Blessings conferred upon him?

The *Observation* is this:

That it is the Duty of Christians seriously to enquire, what they ought to render to God for all his Benefits towards them.

As the *Psalmist* in the 119 *Psalm*, the 6. *vers.* had respect to all God's Commands; so he desires to value highly every Mercy, and to his utmost Power give God the Praise of all his Mercies. *What*, says he, *Shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?*

In the handling of this Point:

I. I shall shew, that many, and great are the Blessings and Benefits that we have received.

II. I

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II. I shall give some Reasons, why we should seriously enquire, what we ought to render to God for all these Blessings and Benefits.

III. I shall shew what we must render.

And then, in the last place, make *Application*.

I. I shall shew, that great and many are the Blessings and Benefits that we have received. We Christians have a large Field for the Exercise of our Thankfulness in praising God; as we are not able to keep all the Commands of God, so we are not able to reckon up all the Mercies of God, for, indeed, they are innumerable; *Psal.* 43. 5. But though we cannot reckon up all his Benefits in order, yet some of them we are able to express and relate; and in the recital of the Mercies which we enjoy, we should not be unmindful, as others are, of those common Favours which are bestowed upon us.

We owe our very Beings to God; though we are begotten and born of our Earthly Parents, yet God is the chief Parent, and the only Fashioner of us all; *Psal.* 100. 3. By him were our Bodies curiously wrought, and he hath been the Former of our Spirits, *Zach.* 12. 1.

And as he gave us our Being, so he maintains us in it; he condescends to the daily Care and Oversight of us; his daily Visitation preserves our Souls in our Bodies, *Job* 10. 12. God works many daily Wonders to secure and preserve our Lives; if God did not hold and keep our Souls in Life, our Souls could not continue in Life one Minute; our Gracious God thinks upon us to care for us continually; he carries us poor, weak, feeble Creatures in his Arms, even from the Womb to our Old Age, and Gray Hairs; and supports us from sinking into nothing, *Isa.* 46. 4. If he should
cast

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cast us out of his Arms, we must return to Dust, or nothing.

And as he is the God of our Lives to continue and preserve them, so we receive from him daily Benefits to sweeten our Lives, and render them comfortable to us. God doth daily open his Hand, and his Treasures to us; as he hath made many Creatures to serve us, so he gives them to us; they lose their Lives to support and maintain ours. It is God that spreads our Table, gives us our Meat in due season, and doth feed us; it is he that fills our Cup, as *David* describes his Goodness, *Psal. 23. 5.* We receive from God daily Riches of Goodness; he doth, as the *Psalmist* says, *daily load us with Benefits, Psal. 68. 19.* It is from the Blessing of God that our Garments warm us, *Job 37. 17.* Have we Health? We are Debtors to God for this Mercy; he is the God of our Health, and keeps off Diseases: Have we loving Friends daily raised up, wherein much of the comfort of our Lives consist? It is God gives us this Favour, *Gen. 39. 21.*

Have we Success in our Businesses, and Undertakings? This is from the Blessing of the Lord. Some Persons are very base and ungrateful, and take all to themselves, and thank their own Labours, their own Wisdom, Policy and Parts; others ascribe all to their good Fortune; but these are practical Atheists. It is the Blessing and Favour of God that makes us and all we have to prosper. Have any of us Riches? It is his Blessing that maketh rich, *Prov. 10. 22.* Or have we Credit or a good Name, which, as *Solomon* says *Prov. 22. 1. is better than Riches?* It is our gracious God that gives it, and not our Wisdom, Parts or Worth, *God crowns our Days with his Goodness, and his daily Paths drop Fatness.*

And

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And as we are Debtors to him for our Being and Preservation, and for the Streams of Benefits that have daily flowed to us; and the Showers of Mercies that have daily fell on us; so for signal Deliverances from imminent Dangers, for disappointing those Intrigues and Stratagems, which were lately so artfully contriv'd by some ill designing Men to effect our Ruin.

Our Enemies had lately grasped all Power into their Hands; and they presum'd to level all Obstacles to their lofty Designs; as if their Power had been equal to their Pleasure; they were big with Expectations of having a Popish Pretender advanced to the Throne; they were full of Confidence, and look'd upon us as their sure Prey, and we could not but look upon our selves in great Danger; but the Time of Mercy was come, our gracious God, who saw our Danger, hath brought a Protestant King to his Dominions in Peace and Safety, whom he hath raised up as a second Deliverer from a slavish Yoke, and a Popish Impostor. As he is advanced over us by the Consent of the People, so by a special and mighty Hand of God. It was *the Lord's Doing*, and well may it be *marvellous in our Eyes*. He hath sent us a King of consummate Virtue and exemplary Piety, of distinguishing Judgment and Prudence; his wise Conduct and Equity in Government, his Magnanimity, his Zeal for the Protestant Interest at the lowest Ebb, and for the general Reformation of Manners; his Vigilance and Care in managing Affairs of State, and his parental Care of all his People, speak him a very great Blessing to these Nations. He hath sent to us a King, that gives more Honour to the Throne, than indeed it is capable to reflect on him that sits thereon. God hath placed that Crown upon his Royal Head, to which his

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his Majesty alone had a just and unquestionable Right, his Majesty's Succession to his rightful Throne was in such a way, as hath indeed filled his Faithful Friends and Loyal Subjects with great Admiration and Thanksgiving, and his open and secret Enemies with Amazement and Confusion.

The dreadful Storm that lately threatened us is by the Providence of our good and gracious God blown over; and truly 'tis astonishing to think that these Nations, so swarming with Drunkards, Swearers, Adulterers, Sabbath-breakers, and Profaners of his Name; with envious, wrathful and contentious Persons, Persons eminent for Wickedness, with Persecutors of Christ's Disciples, and Formalists in Religion; yea, so swarming with Atheists, and Scoffers at Religion, and the Zealous Professors thereof, should nevertheless be thus favoured and thus delivered! O *Britain*, God hath done great things for thee; saved thee with a great Salvation.

It is of the Lord's Mercy, that we dwell so safely under the King's shadow; notwithstanding the burning and glowing Fury of our enraged Enemies, God hath set over us a King that doth not cut us off from the Wells of Salvation; that doth not bar us from the Springs of Ordinances; but gives us liberty to serve our God without fear, according to our Consciences: His late Royal Assurance of his Favour and Protection, affords us a comfortable Prospect, and great Satisfaction. 'Tis no small Mercy to have our Just Liberties secured from the Violence of our Enemies; we have under his Majesty's Government the free Dispensation of the Blessed Gospel; and this is a Mercy that sweetens other Mercies.

II. And we have not only a Prospect of a last-
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ing, and continued Settlement under his present Majesty, but under his Royal Posterity after him; when we consider those Noble Virtues that are so brightly shining in his Royal Highness the Protestant Prince of *Wales*, the only right apparent Heir of the Crown: When we consider his Generous Disposition and good Inclinations; his Heroick Courage, and firm steady Zeal for the Protestant Religion and Interest, and our Just Liberties; and also when we behold a Royal Princess of *Wales*, and her Virtues and Endowments, which are too conspicuous to be concealed from General Observation; a Princess that hath signalized her Zeal for the Protestant Religion, and the Interest of Christ; a Princess that is the Mother of a Royal Off-spring: What great and choice Blessings do we at present enjoy! and what a joyful comfortable Prospect of lasting Blessings is given to these Nations! How well is the Throne Established! And how are the Hopes of a Pretender, and of all our high, proud, and cruel Enemies confounded! For all these Blessings we are Debtors to the Lord our God, whose Name alone is excellent, and whose Glory is above the Earth.

And as we Christians are Debtors to God for Temporal Favours and Blessings; so we have many Spiritual Mercies superadded to these Temporal Benefits, and the choicest Mercies should have our highest Praises; as we are Debtors to God, as well as other Men for our Being, Preservation, and all the Riches of his Temporal Goodness, so we are especially Debtors to God above all other Men. We have Love of another nature, and Benefits of another kind; we have choicer Mercies, more signal Expressions and Manifestations of the Kindness of God to us. Oh the Height and Length,
and

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and Depth, and Breadth of the Love of God in sending his Son Christ into the World to be our Saviour and Redeemer, and to reconcile us to himself by his Death ! O wonderful, that the Word should be made Flesh, *Joh. 1. 14.* That he who was in the Form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, should take upon him the form of a Servant, and become obedient to death, that we might not die and perish for ever, *Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8.* God manifested the highest Love, when he might have shewed the highest Enmity.

And as we are Debtors to God for our Redemption, so for the unspeakable Blessing of Vocation ; Oh the wonderful Grace of God, that he should count us worthy of his Calling, and seeking after ! That he should call us so as to draw us to his Son Christ ! That he should call so as to give us a Light, a Life, and a Liberty above the rest of the World !

And as we are Debtors to God for our Effectual Calling, so for our Justification : Oh what a rich Mercy is this, that God should not only call us, but justifie us from all our Sins freely, and fully for Christ's sake ; and pronounce and accept us as righteous in his sight, upon the account of his Son's Righteousness and Satisfaction ; tho' we that are Believing Christians have no Ground of Confidence in our selves ; tho' we are poor and empty in our selves, yet we may glory in Christ Jesus ; Glory in the greatness of our Surety ; of our High Priest, of the Sacrifice that hath been offered for us ; may glory in the Greatness of Christ's Sufferings, the Lowness of his Abasement ; may glory in the Victory of Christ, in his full Discharge and Performance of all that his Father required of him ; and that he covenanted to un-

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dertake and undergo for Sinners ! We that before our Justification dreaded God as an Enemy and terrible Judge, may now call him Father ; we that before could not open our Mouths, lift up our Heads, or shew our Faces, may now draw nigh, and have Boldness to enter into the Holiest, because God is at peace with us, and reconciled to us.

And we are not only Debtors to God for our Justification, but also for our Sanctification ; there is a great Obligation upon us for our Corporal Making, but our Obligation to God is greatest for our Spiritual Making, or for making us Saints ; for who can do these great things but God ? who can regenerate, sanctifie, or give new natures, but God alone ? We were by Nature very bad, it is he that hath made us good ; we were in our natural State proud, it is he that hath made us humble : We were by Nature Earthly, it is he that made us Heavenly : We were in our Natural State Carnal, it is he that hath made us Spiritual : We are signally Debtors to God for renewing upon our Souls in any measure his own Blessed Image, the least Glimpse whereof is infinitely more worth than the whole World.

And as we owe our Effectual Vocation into a State of Grace, so our abiding and continuance in it, unto the Lord our God. As he calls us out of Sin unto Holiness ; so he keeps us from Sin in Holiness. As he is a Preserver of our outward Estates, as I have shew'd, so he is a Preserver of our Spiritual Estates. As he visits our Souls by preventing Grace ; and gives us what we had not, so he visits us by his preserving and persevering Grace ; and so continues what he hath given. Our Spiritual Treasure is in hazard, and would decay, if the Love, Care, and all-sufficient Power of our God, was not engag'd in the preservation of it.

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We are in a World full of Snares, and dangerous Temptations, and these are assisted, and advantag'd by our own remaining Corruptions ; and we have to do with a busie Devil, who watcheth all Advantages ; a restless Enemy, that desires to toss and vex us ; we meet with Satan's daily Assaults, and therefore we cannot stand of our selves ; we are, as the Apostle says, *Kept by the Power of God*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Φερουμένοι*, kept as with a Garrison, or as in a Garrison'd City, he preserves us by fortifying us, and putting in fresh Supplies of his Spirit, so that neither Sin, nor Devil, nor World, can divide and separate us from our God ; Oh how great and many are our Obligations and Ingagements to our God !

We are Debtors to God for our Redemption, Reconciliation to him, and for our Pardon, for our Spiritual Life, Liberty and Perseverance ; we are Captives redeem'd and releas'd, we are Enemies reconcil'd, we are Traytors pardon'd, Bankrupts set up, lost Sheep recover'd, renew'd and carefully preserv'd ; *By the Grace of God we are what we are*, 1 Corin. 15. 10. And finally, we are Debtors to the Lord our God for giving us everlasting Consolation, and good Hope thro' Grace of that Inheritance in Heaven, which is incorruptible, undefil'd, and that fadeth not away, reserv'd there for all his Saints and People, where we shall be employ'd in the highest Acts of Worship and Adoration, even Love, Praise, Admiration of free Grace, and Halleluja's for ever.

Thus in the first Place I have shew'd, that great and many are the Blessings and Benefits that we have received from our God.

II. I shall give a few Reasons why we should seriously enquire, what we ought to render to God for all those Blessings and Benefits.

Reason 1.

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Reason 1. Because we are undeserving Creatures, unworthy of the Benefits which we have receiv'd ; God hath bestow'd Benefits on us, when we have done much to quench his Love, alienate his Heart, and have shamefully abus'd his Benefits and Favours ; our Ways have been Ways of Provocation, and God's Ways have been Ways of rich Mercy and wonderful Salvation ; we read in *Rom. 5. 8.* that *when we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us*, so while we were yet Sinners God gives great Blessings, Benefits and Salvation from great Evils ; we cannot but be sensible of the Vanity of our Minds, the Carelessness of our Spirits, the Sinfulness of our Hearts, the Irregularity of our Affections, the Folly of our Lips, and the Errors of our Ways, the Weakness and Imperfection of all our Services, and therefore we must conclude that we have nothing to commend us to God, and that we deserve no Blessing from him, *God is good to the evil and unthankful*, *Luk. 6. 35.* O how doth God stoop and condescend to us in every Mercy that he bestows on us ; his Bowels yearn when his Anger might burn, he loads us with his Benefits when he might load us with Punishments ; he arrays himself with Love and Grace, when he might cloath himself with the Garments of Vengeance. *It is of the Lord's Mercies*, and not of our Merits, *that we are not consumed*, *Lamen. 3. 22.* All the Blessings and Benefits that we ever received, flow from the Spring of undeserved Grace and Mercy. What an humble Confession did *Jacob* make of his own Unworthiness, *I am not*, saith he, *worthy of the least of thy Mercies*, *Gen. 32. 10.* In the foregoing Chapter from the 38 to the 41 Verse, *Jacob* pleads his Merits towards *Laban*, but now having to do with the great God, he sets a very low Esteem of himself, as not deserving the least of God's Mercies ;

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cies ; if we consider our Sinfulness and Unworthiness, there is great Reason why we should seriously enquire, *What we ought to render to God for all his Benefits towards us ?*

Reason 2. Because God requires and expects a Return. God requires a grateful Return, Psal. 50. 14, 15. He indents, conditions and covenants with his People for this Rent, *I will deliver and thou shalt glorifie :* And he expects that we should return something for all his Benefits which we have received from him, he looks for some Requital to be made to him, for some Answer to be given to all his Mercies, else why did our Lord ask in *Luke 17. 17, 18. Where are the Nine, there were Ten cleansed, and only One, viz. a Samaritan returned to give Glory to God.* As the Husbandman that sows his Land with good Seed, looks for a Crop and a plentiful Harvest, so God having sowed us plentifully with the Seed of Mercy, expects a Harvest of Love, Praise and Obedience.

Reason 3. Because God is much displeased at the Ingratitude of good Men ; God finds fault with Heathens for Ingratitude, *Rom. 1. 21.* who had only the works of *Creation* and *Providence* ; and if he was angry with Heathens, much more will he be angry with Christians for their Unthankfulness. What a sad Charge is there against *Hezekiah*, in *2 Chron. 41. 25.* God forms a Process, enters an Action of Ingratitude against him, for he had received a great Benefit from God, even the Restoring of his Health, and the Continuance of his Life ; when he had received a Sentence of Death ; and did feel the violence of that Disease that did threaten speedily, and certainly to cut off his Life, and dispatch him out of the World, and such was his sense of Danger, and feeling of Death approaching, that he needed a Miracle to perswade him,
that

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that Death should raise it's Siege, and that the remaining Spark of Life should be victorious over those Floods of his Distemper, that were likely immediately to quench it ; and God caused the Sun to go back, and added fifteen Years to his Life. *Hezekiah* seemed to have a great sense of this Benefit which he had received from God, *Isa.* 38. 17. and to promise that he would praise God *all his days*, v. 20. yet the sense of God's Goodness and his Obligations seemed to wear off ; his Receipts were great, but his Returns were small ; our Returns should bear some proportion to our Receipts ; but the best Christians fall short. *Hezekiah* rendered not unto the Lord according to the Benefit received ; and God did so resent his Ingratitude, and was so affected with it, that Wrath is said to be on him, and on the People for it ; his Life was not only a Mercy to himself, but a Blessing to the People ; but there being not a grateful sense of his Recovery from a deadly Disease, therefore Wrath was against him and them. It is a very great Evil, and provoking ; when Christians render not to God the Glory of his Mercies. God's Mercies should blow up a Fire of Love in his People ; and if they do not ; be sure they will kindle a Fire of Wrath in God. If Man's Kindness to an Enemy doth heap Coals of Fire on his Head to consume him, if it melt him not, *Rom.* 12. 20. much more will God's Goodness to his People heap Coals of Wrath on them to punish them, if it doth not melt them into Thankfulness and Praise.

III. I shall shew what we must render.

David was filled with serious Desires to know and do his Duty in Return for all God's Benefits towards him ; *What*, saith he, *shall I render unto the Lord ?* and let this good Man's Answers to this

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this great and important Question, which we find in this *Psalms*, be mine.

1. We must render to God our Love for *All his Benefits* : When *David* was communing with his Heart about the Return which he should make to his God for delivering him, upon his crying to him, from dangerous and deadly Calamities, which were as great and grievous as Death it self, as we may read in the 3^d and 4th Verses of this *Psalms*, he determines to give God his Love, *Vers. 1. I love the Lord, because he heard my Voice and my Supplication* ; as if he had said, His Mercy to me hath drawn out my Love to him ; the best Affections of my Soul shall now be consecrated to thee, O my God, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, O Lord ?* That which our God prizeth the most from us, that which he earnestly desireth above all other things, is, that we should render to him our Love. When *Moses* had rehearsed the great and gracious Works of God for the People of *Israel*, his delivering them out of *Egypt*, his drying up the *Red-Sea* for them, and drowning the *Egyptians* ; his leading and feeding them in the Wilderness, and that by a daily Miracle ; from these Premises he draws this Conclusion, that God expected Returns, and grateful Acknowledgments from them, *Deut. 10. 12.* When God speaks to Persons in a Language of Love, he looks for an Eccho of Love. What doth the Lord require but to love him ? How reasonable is his Demand, could he ask less than this ? Certainly we cannot deny the Equity of his Claim, we cannot except against that which he requires, for this is his right and due, and we should be unjust to deny this Rent to God ; we should greatly wrong him and be injurious to our own Souls, in gain-saying this Demand ; 'tis but our Love
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that God requires ; he that hath done great things for us, might have asked greater things than our Love ; but he only asks this, and surely this is not an hard Request ; was there ever any Debt so easily paid as this ?

2. We must render Praise to God, *I will offer to thee, saith David, the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, ver. 17.* Holy David asks in my Text, *What shall I render unto the Lord ?* and in this verse 17. he gives an Answer to the Question, *I will render the Tribute of Praise to God, to whom it is due.* The Psalmist describes the *Israelites* very forward, even upon the spurt, to give God Praise and Glory for the Mercy they had received in their Deliverance at the *Red-Sea* where the *Egyptians* were drowned, *Psal. 106. 12. Then believed they his Words, they sang his Praise ;* yet it follows immediately, *v. 13. They soon forgot his Works ;* the Mercy in a short time was as much forgotten, as if it had never been received ; but God's Servant *David* was of another Spirit : he charged his Soul never to forget God's Benefits, but to bless God for them all the Days of his Life, *Psal. 103. 2.* We exceedingly please God when we render Praise unto him for the great and many Benefits which he hath bestowed upon us, *Heb. 13. 15, 16.* Concerning Praise it is said, that it pleased the Lord better *than an Ox or Bullock.* *Psal. 69. 30, 31.* And we read in *Psal. 50. 8, 9.* that God rejecteth external Legal Sacrifices. And in the 14th verse he shews what the Sacrifices are which he doth most prize, *viz. the Sacrifices of Thankfulness and Praise,* proportionable to his great, glorious, and numberless Favours ; that Sacrifice which pleased God more than the Sacrifices under the Law, must needs be well-pleasing unto him ; therefore we should offer to God this Sacrifice of Thankgiving,

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giving, tho' this is but a poor Return for all God's rich and choice Benefits, yet it is such as God will accept, if it come from sincere and upright Hearts.

3. We must render our selves to God by way of Gratitude. When this good Man *David* was debating the Case with himself, *What he should render to God for all his Benefits towards him?* He fully resolves to yield, resign, and give himself to God, to be for ever his and at his Dispose, *Psal.* 116. 12, 16. *What shall I render?* Lord, I render my self to thee, my whole Self, Body, Soul and Spirit, *Truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant,* the purpose of my Heart, the desire of my Soul, the design of my Life is to please thee, to do thy Will; though I do not serve thee so perfectly as I ought, yet truly I am one of thy Servants: He appeals to God for his Sincerity in this, he maintains and asserts it in the Lord's Presence, that he was a Servant of his: The Apostle says, *2 Corin.* 12. 14. *I seek not yours, but you;* he sought not the Estates of the *Corinthians*, but the Good and Salvation of their precious Souls: So the like may be said of God, he doth not seek ours, but us, therefore we must dedicate and devote our selves to his Praise, render our whole Selves, our Bodies and our Souls, in Truth and Sincerity; we must not think of giving less than our Selves. What is it to give Words? If we give not our Selves, nothing less will be acceptable, and he is better pleased when we give him our Selves, than with any other Gift that we have to give him. As the Saints of God do prize none of his Gifts so much as the Gift of himself; others are common Gifts, but this Gift is of the greatest Worth and most inestimable Value; other Mercies are ordinary Mercies, but this is THE Mercy, and the Saints look upon

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it as the greatest Blessing and Favour ; so when we yield and render our selves to God, he esteemeth this Gift above all the Gifts we can give him : If *Philemon*, as we read *Phil. v. 19.* did owe himself to *Paul* the Minister of Grace, then we do much more owe our selves to the God of all Grace ; so that when we give our selves, we give but what is God's own ; and this giving of our selves, is rather a paying of God, than a giving to him.

4. We must render and offer up to God the Sacrifice of a more exact holy Life. When *David* had received from God a wonderful Deliverance from the Snares of Death, he determines to render to God this Sacrifice, viz. to walk with more Exactness before God for the time to come, *Psal. 116. 6, 7, 8.* *I was, says he, brought low and he helped me, thou hast delivered my Soul from Death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from falling ;* then see what he renders to God for this Deliverance, *v. 9.* *I will, says he, walk before the Lord in the Land of the Living.* Though a Godly Life cannot profit God yet it glorifies him, and therefore 'tis a necessary Return for the Benefits and Favours which we have received from God ; though we cannot return him any Equivalent for his Benefits, yet by a more close and holy walking with himself, and by expressing more of the Power of Godliness in our Lives, and thus consulting the Honour of our God, we shew that we bear grateful Minds, and would render again according to the Benefits which we have received : There are some Persons that will magnifie the great Works of Mercy which God hath done, by keeping a Day of Thanksgiving enjoyn'd by Publick Authority, because they are better'd in their outward Enjoyments, who yet are not a whit more pious or spiritual

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spiritual by his Works of Mercy ; such as these do not indeed magnifie the Mercies of God, nor the God of their Mercies ; it were better not to receive Benefits and Mercies, than not to be better'd by them. It is not our discoursing much of God's Benefits, or our crying up his Mercies in our Words, which is the magnifying of them, but then are they magnify'd indeed, when they are magnify'd in our Works, when we labour after greater Degrees of Holiness than we had before, and do lay out our selves with greater Zeal in God's Service, and do live more to him who hath loved us, and done so much for us.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

1. *For Reprehension* : Is it so that it is the Duty of Christians seriously to enquire, what they ought to render to God for all his Benefits towards them ? Then this Point severely reprehends and justly rebukes the Ingratitude of many Christians. Doth not even Nature teach them to be grateful to their Friends and Benefactors ? How blameable then are many Christians, that prove ungrateful to God, the best of Friends and kindest of Benefactors ? How few have a lively Feeling of God's Mercies, and the right Taste of his Goodness, and any deep Apprehensions of his Love, in bestowing great Benefits upon them, and in giving them great Hopes of glorious Enjoyments ? How few have that Sense of God's Favours which he expects ? How few that are caring and making enquiry, what they shall render to God that hath thus loved them, that are fill'd with any serious Desires to know and do their Duty, in return for all God's Benefits towards them ? How little solicitous are many Christians to express their Thankfulness and Love to their God, to do Service for him, and bring forth Fruit

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Fruit unto him? O how very cold are they as to their Love to God, and how very dull are they in his Service! Their Words and Discourses speak them to be Debtors to God, but truly their Actions do speak no such Ingagement to him, or Obligation towards him, hence these frequent Wishes in *Psal. 107. 8, 15, 21, 31. O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men!*

2. *Use for Exhortation:* Then hence let me exhort and perswade all Christians, for whom God hath done great things, seriously to enquire, What they shall render unto him for all his Benefits towards them, and particularly for those Mercies of God which are fresh and new before their Eyes, and our good King hath call'd us to celebrate this Day.

Some Persons, to whom God hath been kind and bountiful, ask, *What they shall render*, only in jest, only in a shew, they only mock God when they ask this Question; they ask, *What they shall render?* when at the same time they are unwilling to make any real Return.

Be exhorted therefore, O Christians, to enquire heartily, as those that are willing to know their Duty, and to practise it, and make Returns to God. If Christians must, as you read *Rom. 13. 7. Render to all their dues*, O then will you not render to God his due? You owe your selves, your Love and your Services to him; you are bound in Conscience, bound in Honour, bound in Gratitude to Love your God with an intire and endeared Love for the Benefits you have received from him, and to bless his Name as long as you live, and to give your selves to him and his Service: O then be much in admiration of his great and many Benefits, and be daily enquiring

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ring, what Love is render'd to God, what Praise is return'd, what Service is perform'd, what Fruit is brought forth to him? As when *Mordecai* had done great Service, discover'd and reveal'd the barbarous Plot and Design against the King, *Ahasuerus* ask'd, *What had been done for him?* *Esth.* 6. 3. So, Christians, since God hath done great things for you, his eminent Favours which you have received from him should put you upon asking, What you have done for God?

This Concern should much affect you, and lie very near your Hearts, how you may correspond to God's Design, and answer his End in all his Works of Mercy: O be affected with a jealous Fear, lest you prove unthankful, and cross and defeat his End in bestowing signal Mercies upon you, and in giving you seasonable and remarkable Deliverances; lest, like *Hezekiah*, you render not again according to the Benefits done unto you.

And since Praise and Prayer are good in Company, I shall now conclude, praying, That God who hath bestowed signal Blessings and Benefits upon you, and who hath Multitudes of Mercies, who can send down still plentiful Showers of Blessings, and is never weary of Acts of Kindness, would follow you with the Blessings of his Goodness all the Days of your Lives; and that as he hath done great things for you, so he would work those great things in you which are required of you; that as he hath granted you many Favours, so he would give you strength to make suitable and answerable Returns for them.

And I would not only conclude thus praying for you, but praying particularly for our Renowned King, whom God hath set over us; who highly deserves the Prayers of all good Protestants,
That

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That as God's gracious Hand hath hitherto been with him for Good, so he may still be the Favourite of Heaven; That God would preserve his Sacred Person, and make his Majesty always happy in his Government, and would continue long his precious Life, so necessary for preserving the pure Religion and the Civil Rights of these Nations. And that he would keep His Royal Highness the Prince and the Princess of *Wales*, and all the Branches of His Majesty's August Family, in his encompassing Favour, which is the best Protection, and that All the Enemies of our King, and of his Royal Family may be cloathed with Shame and Disappointment. *Amen.*

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FINIS.



